



# May Newsletter

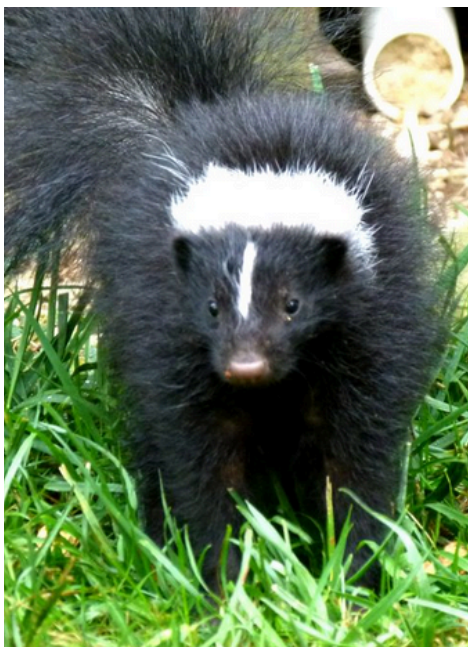


## A Tail of Two Families (pun intended)

by Rev. Rob Merola, Rector

Several summers ago, a skunk family made its summer home under our deck. There were six babies, all of them cute as can be. People asked us if it was hard living with a family of skunks. Yes. It was hard not to pick up the little fluff-balls, or at least try and pet them.

One morning the skunks remained active later than usual. Linda, my daughters, and I sat on the grass and watched the skunks shuffling and snuffling as they searched for food. Just like kittens or puppies, they played and fought and romped and stomped and sniffed and snipped at each other. For our part, we just laughed and laughed and laughed. Two families together having a great time.



“*The smallest moments often become our favorite memories.*”

Eventually most of the skunks retreated back under the deck. The runt of the litter, however, took that as an opportunity to feed more freely now that his pushy big brothers and sisters were no longer present. He ventured further and further out into the yard.

Skunks have very bad eyes, so it wasn't until he was just inches in front of us that he saw us (and Christine in particular). He was shocked! He arched his back like a witch's cat, stood up as straight and tall as he could, tail erect. He stomped menacingly, coming even closer.

We all tried not to laugh as we didn't want to surprise him further. To this point his tail was still turned away from us, so we weren't worried--but we didn't want that to change.

He stomped again, just to make his point, and then took several steps backward. He wanted so badly to look fierce and intimidating but somehow only managed to look all the more adorable in the process.

"Awwwww. Please can I pet him?" one of my daughters said. Fortunately, at that point he too disappeared under the deck.



Summer is a great time for making memories. Whether at home or at St. Matt's, on a vacation or on a mission trip, opportunities abound. Don't miss them!

Warmly,  
Rob+

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- May the 4<sup>th</sup> Be With You!
- May Outreach
- Mother's Day Mom-o-sa Bar
- Youth Summer Events

# May at St. Matt's

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<p>This is not a full list of all events or uses of the St. Matthew's buildings, visit: <a href="http://stmtts.org/calendar">stmtts.org/calendar</a> for the most up-to-date schedule.</p>				<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Bible Study 12 PM</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Men's Group 8 AM</p>
<p><b>4</b> Genevieve Preaching</p> <p>Star Wars Day May the 4<sup>th</sup> Be With You!</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Social Time on Zoom at 12 PM ID: 681-861-620</p> <p>Bread of Life Book Group 7 PM</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Compline 8 PM Online</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Wednesday Book Discussion 7 PM</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Bible Study 12 PM</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>Men's Group 8 AM</p> <p>Women's Coffee Meet Up 9:00 AM</p>
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>Deacon Kara Preaching</p> <p>Mother's Day Mom-o-sa Bar &amp; Poppy Photo Booth!</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>Social Time on Zoom at 12 PM ID: 681-861-620</p> <p>Bread of Life Book Group 7 PM</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>Compline 8 PM Online</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>Wednesday Book Discussion 7 PM</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>Bible Study 12 PM</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>2030 Group Outing</p>
<p><b>18</b> Fr. Rob Preaching</p> <p>Pizza Party &amp; Instrument Petting Zoo</p> <p>WGB Service Event</p> <p>Youth -Tree of Life Event</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>Social Time on Zoom at 12 PM ID: 681-861-620</p> <p>Bread of Life Book Group 7 PM</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>Compline 8 PM Online</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>Wednesday Book Discussion 7 PM</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>Bible Study 12 PM</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>Men's Group 8 AM</p>
<p><b>25</b> Fr. Rob Preaching</p> <p>Hot Dog Bar + Red, white, and (blue) STEM Kids Coffee Hour!</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>(Memorial Day)</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>Compline 8 PM Online</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>Newcomer's Picnic at Fr. Rob's</p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>Bible Study 12 PM</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>Game Night 6 PM</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>Men's Group 8 AM</p>

## SAVE THE DATES:

June 3 - Celebration Garden Volunteering Begins  
 June 8 - Graduation Sunday  
 June 15 - Father's Day

June 15 - Rising 6th Grade join Donuts & Discovery!  
 June 22- Youth Great Falls Hike



## Outreach at St. Matt's



### Honor a Teacher, Support a Student Teacher Appreciation Week is May 5-9

Looking for a creative and meaningful way to thank a teacher this year? Join the **HRTS Teacher Appreciation Campaign**—and help us spread the word!

This unique initiative invites families to honor teachers by sponsoring a student through the Backpack Buddies program. Each donation provides weekend meals for a child in need—right here in our Sterling schools—while letting teachers know their work truly matters.

There are even downloadable cards kids can sign!

#### Here's how you can help:

- Share a post honoring a teacher on social media and tag @hungerresponse #HonorATeacher
- Invite your school's PTA to share this idea with families
- Share the campaign with friends and neighbors

Let's fill our feeds—and our community—with gratitude.

#### Learn more:

[sterlinghelp.org/teacher](http://sterlinghelp.org/teacher)





# OUTREACH EVENT

**Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> 1PM - 3:30PM**

Join us at Women Giving Back for an afternoon of service. Women are invited to bring any gently used spring/summer women's and kids' clothing to donate. The greatest need currently is children's clothing, sizes 2T - 18 and size 4 diapers.

**RSVP is required: [stmtts.org/WGB](http://stmtts.org/WGB)**





### Why St. Matthew's Is an “And Then Some” Church

*by Ann Lowden, Outreach Volunteer*

A few weeks ago, the parent liaison at Park View High School reached out with a special request—**three young students were expecting babies** and needed support. I passed the message to Kristin, our Outreach Coordinator, and she sent a note to the congregation.

Within hours, the generosity began to pour in. Over the next two weeks, my home turned into a staging area for love in action—Amazon packages arriving daily, families dropping off diapers, baby gear, clothing, and essentials. By the time we delivered everything—four SUV loads—we had collected:

- **4 infant car seats (3 brand new)**
- **3 brand new cribs**
- **2 baby swings**
- **3 strollers (2 brand new)**
- **Changing table, carriers, blankets, bottles, toys**
- **38 onesies and 50+ baby clothes**
- **Over 700 diapers**

#### It was overwhelming in the best way.

This is why I love St. Matthew's. Years ago, when Fr. Rob arrived, we took a survey asking what kind of church we wanted to be. The answer? A church rooted in Outreach. A church that shows up—and then some.

And that's exactly what you did. You gave, you showed up, and you changed the lives of three young women who now know they are not alone.

Thank you for being an “and then some” church. You continue to remind me what it means to love our neighbors—and to do so with open hearts, open hands, and joy.



## Events & Small Groups

# May Coffee Hour Events

Sundays at 10:30 AM



### May the 4<sup>th</sup> Be With You!

Journey to a galaxy far, far away... right in the parish hall.

Whether you're a Jedi Master, a young Padawan, or just in it for the Wookiee cookies, there's something for everyone. Sip on Yoda Soda, snack on Death Star Donuts, and fuel up with some Hoth chocolate.

Costumes encouraged—light sabers optional. **This is the brew you're looking for.**



### Mother's Day | Mom-o-sa Bar & Poppy Photo Booth

Join us for a joyful morning of worship and celebration as we honor moms, mother figures, and all those who nurture with love.

At 10:30 AM, enjoy the **Create-Your-Own Mom-o-sa Bar**—a fizzy and fun toast to the incredible people who lift us up. Plus, don't miss our special **photo ops with Marigold Bus and Booth Poppy Photo Booth** to capture the moment with the ones you love most!



### Celebrate National Pizza Party Day!

Technically, National Pizza Party Day falls on the third Friday in May, but we're celebrating on Sunday, May 18, because why limit joy (and cheese) to just one day?

Join us at 10:30 AM in the Parish Hall for a **pizza-themed coffee hour** that's sure to melt hearts and mozzarella alike.

**Think breakfast pizza, fruit pizza, pizza rolls, pizza bagels, and pizza dip!**



### Hot Dog Bar + Stars & Stripes STEM Activities

This Memorial Day Weekend, we're turning up the fun with a **Hot Dog Bar** you won't want to miss—build-your-own with all the toppings and creative combos!

While you enjoy food and fellowship, kids can jump into some red, white, and (blue) STEM with activities that will spark their creativity.

**Bring your appetite, your family, and your festive spirit—we'll bring the fun.**

## May Small Groups



### Bread of Life Book Discussion Group

Mondays at 7 PM

Bread of Life will begin a new book in May: **The Problem of Pain, by C. S. Lewis.**

Please join us for this weekly small group to dive deeper into Christian literature.



### Wednesday Book Discussion Group

Wednesdays at 7 PM

Cherished Belonging Book Group will continue until May 21st. Although we will no longer be meeting at 6:30 for supper, all are welcome to continue to join us for discussion.



### Thursday Bible Study Group

Thursdays at noon

Our Thursday Bible study will continue to take a deeper look at the weekly lectionary readings.

No previous Bible study experience needed.



### Women's Coffee Mixer at Ridgetop

Sat., May 10th | 9 AM

Meet up with other women at Ridgetop Coffee in Sterling for a casual morning of great coffee, conversation, and connection.

Children are welcome!



### 2030 Group Event Hike + Lunch at Bears Den

Sat., May 17th | 8:30 AM

In your 20's & 30's? Join our 2030 Group for connection and conversation! Meet at St. Matt's at 8:30 AM to caravan to Bears Den for a hike, followed by lunch and drinks at Bear Chase Brewery.



Wednesday, May 28th, 6 PM  
Rev. Rob & Linda Merola's Garden

Everyone is invited to enjoy refreshments and fellowship. Main dish & drinks will be provided, please bring a side dish and a lawn chairs or blanket to sit on.

Come through the side gate to the garden  
For Address & to RSVP: [Miriam@stmtts.org](mailto:Miriam@stmtts.org)



FRIDAY, MAY 30TH AT 6 PM

Join us for an evening of laughter and games! Whether you're into board games, card games, or strategy, there's something for everyone.

Bring a snack and your favorite game to share as we enjoy some friendly competition and great company. Fun starts here!



# MAY THE LORD BE WITH YOU

## MAY FAITH FACTORY A NEW COMMANDMENT

### MAY MEMORY VERSE:

**"THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT THAT YOU LOVE  
ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU."**

**-John 15:12**

Join us every Sunday at 9:30 AM for age-appropriate classes designed to spark curiosity, deepen faith, and make learning about Jesus fun and memorable:

- **Preschoolers:** Learn and play with Ms. Zorana in Classroom 3 (*The last Sunday of each month will be messy church! Come dressed to do some sensory exploration.*)
- **K-2nd Grade:** Sing, craft, and explore Bible stories with Ms. Alex in Classroom 2
- **3rd-5th Grade:** Tackle puzzles, try science experiments, and dive into Scripture with Ms. Hilary in Classroom 1

It's a month full of faith, friendship, and love—see you Sunday!

## COLLEGE-AGE INTERNS WANTED

Make this summer count with a paid internship that's fun, fulfilling, and full of purpose. **St. Matthew's and the Hunger Response Team of Sterling (HRTS)** are now hiring college-age interns for hands-on roles that make a real impact in our community.

- **Children's Ministry** – Lead, mentor, and play while helping kids grow in faith
- **Photography** – Capture stories that inspire and shine a light on service
- **Marketing** – Dive into the world of nonprofit marketing and social impact

Whether you're exploring a career in ministry, media, or missions—this is your chance to grow in faith, build real-world skills, and make unforgettable memories.

**To Apply, Email: [Miriam@stmtts.org](mailto:Miriam@stmtts.org)**

## kids coffee hour

Sundays at 10:30 AM



### May 4 - Star Wars Day!

May the 4<sup>th</sup> be with you - and also with you! Join us for some Star Wars fun during coffee hour!



### May 11 - Mother's Day

Enjoy fizzy fruit drinks from our Mom-o-sa Bar & fun photo ops with the Marigold Bus and Booth Poppy Photo Booth!



### May 18 - Instrument Petting Zoo

Music & Arts is joining us to share what some popular instruments look and sound like!



### May 25 - Red, White, and STEM!

Explore some science fun with our Red, White and (Blue) STEM activities!



## JOIN US FOR VBS!

**July 21-25, 2025  
5:30 - 8:30 PM**



True North VBS guides kids on the ultimate Alaskan adventure! Trek the tundra and explore how easy it is to lose sight of what's true in our wild world today. VBS will point them toward Jesus! True North VBS shows them that he is a faithful friend we can always trust. He's our True North!

- Games, Skits, Live Music, Science-y fun Experiments, Dinner each night and more!
- Ages 3 years old through rising 5th grade
- Cost \$50 per camper\*

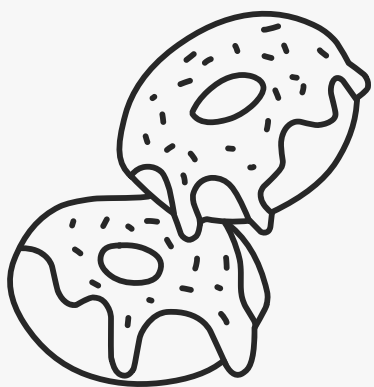
\*Scholarships available, Contact [office@stmtts.org](mailto:office@stmtts.org)

**Learn More: [stmtts.org/VBS](https://stmtts.org/VBS)**



# YOUTH EVENTS MAY 2025

For students in grades 6-12



## DONUTS & DISCOVERY SUNDAYS AT 9:30 AM

**New Series: *Big Questions from the Bible***

Join Ben and Tom on Sunday mornings for a series of engaging discussions on **Big Questions from the Bible**. Each session dives into thought-provoking topics, blending faith, history, and discovery in an approachable way.

Enjoy delicious donuts, meaningful conversations, and a welcoming community. Whether you're a curious skeptic, a long-time believer, or anywhere in between, this is a space for exploration and growth.



## COOK FOR TREE OF LIFE SUNDAY, MAY 18<sup>TH</sup> 4:30 - 7:30 PM at St. Matt's

Help prepare a delicious meal for over 80 people in need. This is a wonderful opportunity to serve the community and make a meaningful impact. There's no cost to participate, plus, **dinner is included**.

Come be a part of something special and make a difference through food and fellowship!



## 2025 SUMMER EVENTS

Summer is coming up fast! Make sure you add St. Matt's Youth Events to your calendar! Details available on the web & on Band!

### June

**6/15** - Rising 6<sup>th</sup>  
Graders Join D&D!  
**6/22** - Great Falls Hike

### July

**7/7-7/11** - Local Missions,  
Day in DC + Rafting  
**7/21-7/25** - VBS Week!

### August

**8/2-8/8** - Florida Mission Trip  
**8/10** - End of Summer Event  
**8/24** - SportRock Event

LEARN MORE: [STMTTS.ORG/YOUTHEVENTS](https://stmtts.org/youthevents)